Who Will Shape Tomorrow?

—Geoffrey Ashe

THE

Commonweal

Europe And America

by Hannah Arendt

Alcide de Gasperi

by Kees van Hoek

olume LX, No. 23 September 10, 1954 Twenty Cents

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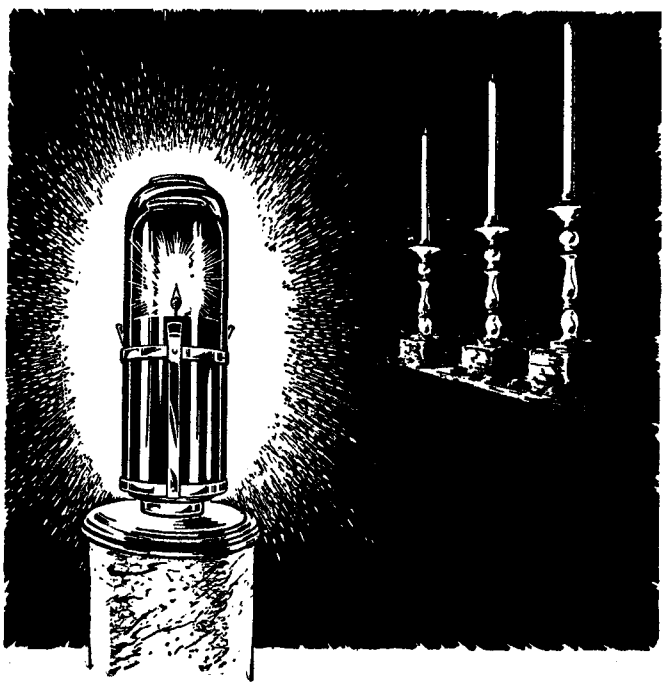

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THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

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Published weekly, printed and copyrighted 1954, in the U. S. A. by the Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879.

U. S. and Canada, $7 a year. Foreign, $9. Single copies, 20c

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THE

Commonweal

week by week

THE ILLUSION OF OMNIPOTENCE

THE concept of crusades is one that many Americans find congenial, squaring, as it does, with important elements in our national tradition. Idealism, optimism, voluntarism: these are part of the American Character. We have wanted great things as a people and believed that to have them we need only will them. Evil, we have felt, is something alien, something un-American, something we could legislate away. Any long-range accommodation with it, even as a fact in human experience, has seemed impossible in the Home of the Brave.

When Candidate Eisenhower began talking about crusades in 1952, for example, his words seemed natural enough to a majority of American voters, and the "crusading" spirit of so many of the Eisenhower administration's foreign policy pronouncements has been widely hailed, in this country, as evidence of a new, dynamic, *American* foreign policy. We all know that the Soviet conspiracy represents an absolute evil, the argument runs, and absolute evil demands absolute opposition. We must, therefore, oppose it "absolutely." We must have a "crusade."

Cardinal Spellman has recently seemed to lend the great prestige of his office and person to this view. In his address before the American Legion National Convention in Washington, D. C., the Cardinal warned against the prospect of peaceful coexistence with the Communist world. "How," he asked,"does one peacefully coexist with men who mouth words of peace while waging treacherous war; men who wear the trappings of civilization while they indulge in the techniques of barbarism? It is ignorance of a fatal kind," he warned, "which prompts the illusion that free men can peacefully coexist with Communism."

The Cardinal did not suggest what alternatives are left to our diplomats if all thought of peaceful settlement is "ignorance of a fatal kind." But support of an "absolute" foreign policy, a "crusade," seems evident in his words. And his words are supported by the terrible tyranny he describes. When a nation is threatened by such tyranny it feels an understandable compulsion to oppose it absolutely, to launch a crusade.

Some distinguished Americans have suggested, however, that the crusade concept is in itself hostile to any possible foreign policy—a sort of illusion of omnipotence that will lead us to disaster, a *hubris* that must accomplish our own destruction. For foreign policy, they insist, is of its nature limited. Its goal is not to fashion the world as we might will it to be but to make life possible in the world we actually find ourselves in.

THIS is one of Adlai Stevenson's major themes in *Call to Greatness,* as it is the chief concern of Charles Burton Marshall in *The Limits of Foreign Policy*. The warnings of both men deserve careful thought.

"Diplomacy," Mr. Stevenson writes, "is not the art of asserting ever more emphatically that attitudes [of other nations] should not be what they are. It is not the repudiation of actuality but the recognition of actuality and the use of actuality to advance our national interests." And Mr. Marshall urges us to recognize the inherent limitations of foreign policy, "so that issues may turn on questions how best to fill these limits rather than on vain propositions of perfection and destructive self-reproach over failure to achieve it."

Now, if all prospect, however remote, of peaceful coexistence is a delusion, any foreign policy is, of course, impossible and only crusades—with all that they imply in the atomic-hydrogen age—are in order. But if we continue to believe that history is non-determined, that it can be molded and altered by the intelligence and patience of man, then some slim hope remains, and with that hope diplomacy can continue to work toward the limited but honorable goal of averting the ultimate calamity of war.

The sad truth is that evil cannot be willed away, and that the only promise of crusades is of

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greater evil. This may be a hard truth for Americans to realize, but it is as tragically certain as is the fact of man's fate itself. Not every evil that is could have been averted without fostering greater evils, and not every one that yet may be can be stopped without inviting the final evil of all, in terms of this world's survival. Our secular hope is limited for as far into the future as we can see. This is the fact with which foreign policy must start in making its choice between painful alternatives.

The lesson we must learn, if there is to be any hope at all, is of the danger of ignoring the world as it is in our haste to create the world as it should be. What we must avoid is the illusion of omnipotence, the seeking to impose our own views, however righteous they may be, upon a recalcitrant world. History is the stuff with which we must work, and history will not be hurried. We will probably have to be satisfied, for a long time to come, with a very limited goal if we are to have any goal at all.

MORE FOOD FOR MORE PEOPLE

AMONG those who are most dubious about the capacity of the world to sustain its increasing numbers the impending crisis is projected some years hence when health measures have had their full effect. Yet there is much immediate encouragement to be found in the latest annual report of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. There are still millions of hungry people in many lands, but over-all food production actually increased last year to a greater extent than the world's increase in population. Moreover much of this greater production of foodstuffs took place where it was most needed—in certain underdeveloped areas. It is also just reported from India, in corroboration, that this year that populous subcontinent as a whole has actually achieved self-sufficiency in food. These are considerable achievements.

Other aspects of the FAO report are far less encouraging. Distribution is bad. Not only are there larger surpluses in the United States and elsewhere, while other countries suffer from chronic short supply; but in hard-pressed countries available food often fails to reach many who need it because of lack of transportation, official corruption, ownership by speculators and the like. In consequence malnutrition is still widespread.

One statement in the FAO report should serve as a striking challenge here in the United States: Latin America is the only one of the poorly fed areas in the world where food production is not increasing faster than the population. That economic difficulties, increasing unrest and dislike of the United States are reported from a number of South American and Central American capitals should hardly be surprising.

It is significant that it is Costa Rica that has just proposed before the UN General Assembly the setting up of a world food reserve—on the basis of six years experimenting on a national scale. Surely nothing could be more welcome to those beset by unmanageable surpluses. And for the chronically underfed peoples some sort of food stockpile would seem long overdue. That would, of course, comprise but one means of attacking hunger in the underdeveloped areas. Presumably the United States would have a leading role in the establishment of such reserves, and also have much to contribute in the way of the technical assistance required to bring about better food production and distribution, better health and increasing productiveness per man in field and factory in Latin America and elsewhere. There have been other pressing concerns in the past fifteen years, but the United States can afford to neglect the other Americas no longer.

NEXT WEEK

HANNAH ARENDT writes about Europe and the atom bomb:

"Courage, under the circumstances of modern warfare, has lost much of its old meaning. By putting in jeopardy the survival of mankind and not only individual life, or at the most the life of a whole people, modern warfare is about to transform the individual mortal man into a conscious member of the human race, of whose immortality he needs to be sure in order to be courageous at all; and for whose survival he must care more than for anything else. Or, to put it another way, while there certainly are conditions under which individual life is not worth having, the same cannot be true for mankind. The moment a war can even conceivably threaten the continued existence of man on earth, the alternative between liberty and death has lost its old plausibility."

THE OPENING BLAST

IF the salvoes from Adlai Stevenson and the forty House and Senate candidates launched at Sioux City, South Dakota, are to prove at all typical, the

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country is in for a rousing political campaign between now and November. A few seats one way or the other will decide control in both Houses in the 84th Congress; so that each individual Congressional campaign this year is invested with a certain national importance.

The Administration's farm program supplies a crucial issue to debate. Secretary Benson has pursued a generally consistent line and is widely regarded as one of the most conscientious and able men in the cabinet. The President himself appears to consider the adoption of somewhat flexible crop supports one of his most solid achievements.

The American electorate has long since learned to discount campaign promises. But the two-score Democratic candidates for Congress succeeded in putting their case very effectively by resorting to certain forms and rhythms characteristic of the Declaration of Independence. For example: "They [the Republican candidates in 1952] said our soil conservation program was moving too slowly—but they strangled it with purse strings and virtually destroyed the great Soil Conservation Service, breaking up the teams of technicians and scattering the agency in forty-eight different directions."

Counterblasts from the Republicans are certain to follow. Each candidate will vie with his opponent to demonstrate that he is the farmer's—and subsequently the worker's and the business man's—best friend. It is the familiar pattern of seeking to offer more in each instance, or to offer it more convincingly. When wooing each segment of the electorate it is not always easy to relate the well-being of that constituent part to the prosperity of the nation as a whole.

From this viewpoint two things may be said about the Eisenhower farm policy. In times of continuing surplus there is a case for flexible supports. Otherwise the incentive is too great for large growers and others to keep on adding to farm surpluses at government expense. (But it must always be remembered that crop supports form part of a regulated whole which includes protective tariffs, minimum wages and credit controls. The farmer does not buy what he needs on a free market; under our American system he, too, needs considerable protection.)

But it is on other scores that the Republican farm record stands most open to criticism from the viewpoint of the nation as a whole. Many of the charges in the bill of particulars issued by the forty Democratic candidates call attention to changes that are not for the better: the aforesaid modification of the Soil Conservation Service, new policies toward REA, the lack of protection for perishable products and Administration policy on the sensitive matter or rural credit. The question is whether these avowedly more business-like procedures do not overbalance what Mr. Benson has done to carry out his honest convictions regardless.

THE AMBIGUOUS BLESSING

MR. Eisenhower has had the problem since he first came back from Europe to accept the Presidential candidacy: he has had to head up both Republican parties, the one that is for him and the one against him. During his campaign the President was put through a lot of embarrassment by having to appear with men whose principles were further away from his own than even the most distant Democrat's. There was the meeting with Taft on Morningside Heights, the excision of praise for General Marshall in that Milwaukee speech, the discomfort of the meeting with Bill Jenner out in Indiana—a series of difficult situations. Mr. Eisenhower found a formula: he didn't engage in personalities. And the formula actually took some of the heat off.

Two years have rolled by; the President still enjoys a vast popularity, and both pro-and anti-Eisenhower Republicans are up for reelection. They all want his endorsement. The question is whether the President will give that endorsement as a kind of reward for those who have supported his program, or whether it is to go to all Republicans, on the partisan premise that any Republican is preferable to any Democrat.

The President has not yet seen fit to make himself clear on where he stands. At the Illinois State Fair, he left the question in a cloud of ambiguity. In the presence of Joseph Meek, a member of the Republican opposition who is running against Senator Paul Douglas, the President said he hoped Illinois would send more Republicans to Congress next year. Mr. Meek took this to be a full endorsement of his own candidacy. Anything more fulsome on the part of the President would be "undignified," Mr. Meek told reporters. But certain liberal Republican newspapers interpretated it as a cold shoulder and hailed Mr. Eisenhower for his independent spirit.

Lately the nation's grammarians were put to work in a drastic effort to find out where the President stands. In a recent statement, Mr. Eisenhower said: ". . . all of us should work together to elect Republican Senators and Congressmen, who will work effectively with leaders of the Executive Branch toward fulfillment of that program." The comma after 'Congressmen' is tremendously important. Since it is there, the clear implication is that

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all Republicans will work toward the end Mr. Eisenhower has in mind. But as long as the President's viewpoint is still questioned, a single comma will probably not dispel the doubts of those who would have the President endorse all who wear the GOP label, including isolationists, reactionaries and assorted McCarthyites.

As a matter of fact, of course, all Republicans will *not* work for the fulfillment of Eisenhower's program, whereas some Democrats have given the program much-needed support. But the President still faces his old dilemma: which comes first with him, his Party or his principles? It is clearly a question he has not yet solved for himself, and until he does, there will be no forthright position announced from the White House. The ambiguity may do for a long time to come. Someone may yet find another helpful formula—like "I never discuss political parties."

YOUTH IN A VIOLENT AGE

RELIGIONISTS, psychiatrists and behaviorists all have their separate explanations for a terrible rise in juvenile delinquency. The violence reported in the press from all over the country actually seems much too frightful for the word 'juvenile'; certainly 'delinquency' seems a mild word to describe the gang beatings, killings and muggings that fill the papers.

Probably no one explanation for all this terror can stand alone. The absence of clear moral standards among so many young people can surely be traced back to a dearth of religious training. The childhood insecurity of the war years and the general tension of these years of Cold War have demanded their toll, too. And there are evidences that many of the young people who have gotten into such desperate difficulties are in revolt against living in underprivileged neighborhoods and belonging to groups which are discriminated against in this period of general prosperity. Many have the feeling that they were cheated out of all that this rich and free country promises its youth, and they are determined to "get theirs" one way or another. But there are clear exceptions to all these generalities. Some of the young people in trouble have been given adequate religious training; others have been, in a material sense, highly privileged.

No matter what the cause, America is faced with a great problem in finding some kind of solution to this strange and pernicious development. Denunciation will not solve anything; too much hasty denunciation and generalization about the shortcomings of the younger generation may, in fact, be a root cause of why so many youngsters feel unwanted or feel called upon to prove something about themselves by joining desperate gangs in desperate deeds.

The problem, which is nationwide, calls for a national program based on the combined effort of our best youth authorities. Clergymen, educators, youth workers, community leaders and youth's own leaders working together can accomplish a great deal. Somehow decent living must be made as attractive as the underworld way of life that has caught so many young imaginations. The TV networks and Hollywood studios, working together, can help here, making amends for their own sins of the past when they tended to fill the screens with violence and calculated mayhem. We could do with a lot less Mickey Spillane on all fronts.

One of the basic problems, to which there is no immediate answer, is that ours is a violent age. For more than a decade now, we have had to teach our young people systematically how to kill and maim and destroy; those who have done well at this have been the heroes of our society. We cannot live in an age of war and expect our youth to treasure the arts of peace very highly. This problem exists all over the world; it is significant that the rise in juvenile delinquency is also a worldwide phenomenon. For the awful fact is that since 1939, we have been giving youth much to die for but very little to live for. The army camp is the high school post-graduate course, and it seems little wonder that many young people come to believe that the lessons of the bayonet drill, rather than the healthy activity of the basketball court, represent the real challenge to this generation.

Immediate attention must be paid to the needs of youth, burdened as they are with the awful obligations of the twentieth century. But there is a sense in which all work for peace, for a just social order and for the dissolution of racial antagonism might be said to be a seeking for the basic answers.

DEATH OF EDC

AS we go to press, there is word that the French National Assembly has definitively killed the European Defense Community, the labor and one of the main hopes of the postwar years. Like our defeat in Indochina, the impending calamity was visible a long way off. That does not make the crumbling of the edifice any more palatable. It simply means that there has been time to develop alternatives on which to fall back. Such is the sober prospect now confronting the United States and her allies.

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Dream and Nightmare

ANTI-AMERICAN FEELING IS WELL ON THE WAY TO BECOMING A NEW EUROPEAN 'ISM'.

HANNAH ARENDT

WHAT image does Europe have of America? Whatever it may be, it is a reflection of actual conditions in this country, it contains an evaluation of America's role in international politics, and it expresses the attitude of the nation concerned with respect to both. The faithfulness of such images to the original is always open to question; they cannot, and are not meant to, conform to standards of photographic objectivity or even journalistic reportage. The present image of America abroad is no exception to this rule, and it is neither less nor more distorted than the images nations used to form of each other in the course of their history and mutual relationships. If there were nothing more involved than misunderstandings, misinterpretations and occasionally violent outbursts of resentment or dislike, the matter would be hardly of more than historical, limited interest.

There are, however, several respects in which the image of America abroad does not conform to the general rule. The first, and perhaps most relevant, exception is the fact that the European image, in distinction from others, cannot be considered a mere reflection and interpretation of actual conditions, for it predates not only the birth of the United States, but the colonization and to some extent even the discovery of the American continent.

Without an image of America, no European colonist would ever have crossed the ocean. The dream and purpose carried by the colonists eventually led to the establishment of one part of European mankind on this side of the Atlantic; it was both the first European image of America and the guiding idea that inspired this country's colonization and political institutions. This image of America was the image of a New World—a name given to no other of the many new lands discovered at the beginning of the modern age. Its content was a new ideal of equality and a new idea of freedom. Both of these, as Tocqueville said, were "exported" from Europe, and neither was fully comprehensible except in the context of European history. Only in the United States did this image find a political realization through the establishment of the American Republic. Yet even this realization was partly an import from Europe, since the founders of the Republic sought counsel in Locke and Montesquieu, who more clearly and more elaborately than Rousseau and the French ideologues (who influenced the history of European revolutions) had laid down the legal and political principles for the foundation of a new body politic.

Through the American Revolution, Europe's image of America came true. A new world was being born because a new body politic had come into existence. By the same token and at the same moment, Europe and the United States (i.e. that part of the new continent which, indeed, had become a new world) parted company. Whatever image Europe had of America, this image could never again become a model or guiding idea for whatever was done or happened in the United States.

EVER since this part of European mankind ceased to be a colony, framed its Constitution and declared itself an independent Republic, America has been both the dream and the nightmare of Europe. Up until the last third of the nineteenth century, the content of the dream was freedom from both want and oppression plus the assertion of human autonomy and power against the weight of the past, a past which through the authority of political institutions and the tradition of spiritual heritages seemed to hinder the full development of the new forces of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At the same time, the very dream was a nightmare to those who were apprehensive of this modern development, and the decision as to whether America was a dream or a nightmare depended primarily, not upon concrete experiences in this country, but upon the political views of the writer, as seen in the attitude he had taken toward the conflicts and discussions of his native land.

Thus America and Europe had parted company. But the image of America as it shines through travelers' reports and novels, poems and political treatises was never alien or exotic, like the images of Africa or Asia

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Miss Arendt is author of *The Origins of Totalitarianism.*

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or the South Sea Islands. Instead, it remained the sometimes fantastically exaggerated and distorted picture of a reality where the most recent traits of European civilization had developed in an almost undiluted purity.

This attitude toward America, first of all, was of course Tocqueville's own, as was indicated quite openly in the very title of his work—*Democracy* in *America*. The whole book bears witness to the fact that his interest in the workings of democracy as a European possibility—or even a necessity—was greater than his interest in descriptions of a foreign country. He came to America to learn the true lesson of the French Revolution, to find out what happened to men and society under the unprecedented conditions of equality. He regarded the United States as a large and wonderfully equipped laboratory where the most recent implications of European history were tried out. Europe, he was sure, if not the whole world, was about to be Americanized; but he would never have thought this process could be somehow in opposition to the European development, as though America and Europe were different in origin and historical destiny.

To Tocqueville, Americans were not a young people against whom Europeans could summon up either pride of ancestry and civilization or, as the case might be, to whom they would feel inferior in vitality. The Americans, he said, "are a very old and a very enlightened people who have fallen upon a new and unbounded country." Had Americans told him, and they were in fact even then quite likely to, that "the American nation, as it is today, was hewn from the forests in comparatively recent times, when brilliant and complex civilizations had already existed . . . for many centuries" (as Robert Trumbull said early this year in the *New York Times Magazine*), he might have replied that the origin of this delusion of youth was in eighteenth century ideas about "noble savages" and the purifying influence of uncivilized nature rather than in actual experiences of pioneerdom and colonization. Or, to put it another way, only because the new history-consciousness of the West used the metaphor of individual biological life for the existence of nations could Europeans as well as Americans delude themselves with the fantastic notion of a second youth in a new country.

However that may be, Tocqueville came to America to look at "the image of democracy itself, with its inclinations, its character, its prejudices and its passions, in order to learn what we have to fear or to hope from its progress." The principle of equality, far from having its roots in the new continent, had been, politically, the most relevant and most striking result of all great events "of the last seven hundred years" of European history. From the viewpoint of modern Europe and the development of the modern age, the United States was an older and more experienced country than Europe herself. So confident was Tocqueville in this view of America as the product of a European development, that he saw even strictly intra-American developments, such as the migration to the West, as a stream that began "in the middle of Europe, [crossed] the Atlantic Ocean, and [advanced] over the solitudes of the New World."

In its details, Tocqueville's view can be debated and stands in need of correction. But by and large it is corroborated by the historical fact. The American Republic owes its origin to the greatest adventure of European mankind which, for the first time since the crusades and at the height of the European nation-state system, embarked upon a common enterprise whose spirit proved to be stronger than all national differences.

TOCQUEVILLE is the greatest but not the only author of the last century who saw the New World as the outcome of an old history and civilization. Today this view is the element conspicuously missing in Europe's image of America. All other opinions of nineteenth century writers, insights and errors, dreams and nightmares alike, have somehow survived, although they have degenerated into cliches whose triviality makes it almost impossible to consider seriously the constantly increasing literature on the subject. But today the U. S. is considered to have no more relationship with Europe than any other country, and frequently considerably less than Russia or even Asia, both of which are being Europeanized through Marxism for a considerable segment of European opinion—by no means including only Communists or fellow-travelers.

There are many reasons for this recent estrangement. Among them is American isolation, which before it became a political slogan had been a political reality for more than a hundred years. In this respect, the European image of America as outside and unconnected with her own development has its origin in America. There is a much more cogent reason, however, which also goes a long way toward explaining why Europe will so often pretend to find herself in closer kinship with non-European nations than with America; this is the stupendous wealth of the United States.

AMERICA, it is true, has been the "land of plenty" almost since the beginning of its history, and the relative well-being of all her inhabitants deeply impressed even early travelers. The general high standard of living (which was not hindered by and did not prevent the formation of gigantic fortunes) was early observed and rightly seen in connection with the political principles of democracy and the concomitant economic principle that nothing ought to be so expensive as per-

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sonal services and nothing so rewarding as human labor. It is also true that the feeling was always present that the difference between the two continents was greater than national differences in Europe itself even if the actual figures did not bear this out. Still, at some moment—presumably after America emerged from her long isolation and became once more a central preoccupation of Europe after the first world war—this difference between Europe and America changed its meaning and became qualitative instead of quantitative. It was no longer a question of better, but of altogether different, conditions, of a nature which makes understanding well nigh impossible. Like an invisible but very real Chinese wall, the wealth of the United States separates it from all other countries of the globe, just as it separates the individual American tourist from the inhabitants of the countries he visits.

We all know from personal experience that friendship involves equality. Although friendship can be an equalizer of existing natural or economic inequalities, there is a limit beyond which such equalization is utterly impossible. In the words of Aristotle, no friendship could ever exist between a man and a god. The same holds true for the relationships between nations where the equalizing force of friendship does not operate.

Between nations, a certain equality of condition, though not an identity, is necessary for understanding and frankness. The problem with American wealth is that, at some moment, it progressed beyond the point where understanding from other peoples, and more specifically from those who inhabit the mother-countries of many American citizens, no longer seems possible and where even personal friendships across the ocean are put in jeopardy.

Those who believe that this situation can be easily corrected by Marshall plans or Point Four programs are, I am afraid, mistaken. To the extent that material aid is motivated by authentic generosity and a feeling of responsibility beyond the more obvious political and economic interests and necessities of American foreign policy, it will earn us no more than the very doubtful gratitude which the benefactor expects—but generally does not receive—from the object of his beneficence.

Mistrust of American intentions, the fear of being pressured into unwanted political actions, suspicion of sinister motives when help is given without political strings attached—these things are natural enough and need no hostile propaganda to arouse them. But even more is involved. In this case, as in all beneficence, the prerogative of action and the sovereignty of decision rest with the benefactor, and therefore, to cite Aristotle once more, it is only natural that the benefactor should love his beneficiaries more than he is loved by them. Where they have suffered passively, he has done something; they have become, as it were, his work.

To these real problems in America's international relationships, Communist propaganda abroad adds the palpably false accusation that the United States became rich from imperialist exploitation, and the even more obvious fantasy of a class-ridden economy where masses toil in misery. These lies are easily contradicted by reality, and they will not live as long as the recent and more dangerous attempt to translate the Marxian division between capitalist and proletariat into terms of foreign policy. This interpretation divides the nations of the world into have-and have-not-countries, and according to this interpretation the only country to fall into the first category is, of course, the United States. Unfortunately, this image of America can draw upon a certain store of experience, and it is now in turn dangerously reinforced by certain current "Americanistic" attitudes and ideologies in the United States. These, I am afraid, are much more widespread and express a more general mood than traditional isolationism or the limited appeal of America-First movements. Abroad, the anti-Americanism which is the other side of this coin is actually much more dangerous than all the tirades against an imperialist, capitalistic land which have become the stock-in-trade of Communist propaganda, precisely because it corresponds to a growing "Americanism" at home.

THE question of the wealth of the United States is no trivial matter, and on the international scene it probably constitutes one of this nation's gravest long-range political problems. It almost seems that the consistent development of the principle of equality under circumstances of great natural abundance has so changed the conditions of human life that U. S. citizens appear to belong to a *species sui generis*. Nor does this situation improve when the average American tourist naively assumes that a similar miracle could occur in other countries if only their people had the wisdom to adopt American institutions and the American way of life.

Perhaps the average American cannot be expected to understand that although equality of condition is spreading throughout the whole world, this equalization will take a different course and require different measures in countries lacking the natural abundance of the American continent. More serious is the fact that the inability to understand each other's circum-

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stances has begun to rear its head in our foreign policy. Much of the unpleasantness in recent British-American relationships, for example, can be explained on these grounds. It is the old story; nothing seems so difficult to understand and stands so squarely in the way of friendship as a radical difference in exterior circumstances.

It has always been the misfortune of rich people to be alternately flattered and abused—and still remain unpopular, no matter how generous they are. That Americans abroad should get a little of this age-old treatment is neither surprising nor unduly disturbing. But it is an altogether different matter that a radical shift has taken place recently in the class structure of those Europeans who are in sympathy with America and those who are not.

For centuries, this country has been the dream of Europe's lower classes and freedom-loving people. At the same time it remained a nightmare for the rich bourgeoisie, the aristocracy and a certain type of intellectual, who saw in equality a threat to culture rather than a promise of freedom. To many of the lower classes in Europe, the restrictions on immigration after the first world war put an end to their hopes of solving their problems through emigration to America. To them, for the first time, America became a bourgeois country, her wealth having become as inaccessible as the wealth of their own bourgeoisie.

After the second world war this situation became more acute, as United States policies first supported the re-establishment or the continuation of the *status quo* everywhere, and then adopted an unfriendly attitude toward Great Britain's peaceful and, on the whole, moderate and controlled change of her own social conditions under the Labor government. Since then, America has seemed not only rich beyond the wildest fantasy, but determined to support the interests of the rich all over the world. Certainly this was neither the intention nor the outcome of American policy abroad, least of all in Europe where the Marshall Plan benefited every class of the population and American officials frequently went out of their way to find some remedy for the worst social injustices. Nevertheless that is the way things have *seemed* to be. As a result, sympathy for America today can be found, generally speaking, among those people whom Europeans call "reactionary," whereas an anti-American posture is one of the best ways to prove oneself a liberal.

Anti-American feeling is, of course, exploited by Communist propaganda, like all other troublesome issues. But to consider it a propaganda product is a serious underestimation of its popular roots. In Europe, it is well on the way to becoming a new *ism*. Anti-Americanism, its negative emptiness notwithstanding, threatens to become the content of a European movement.

IF it is true that each nationalism (though, of course, not the birth of every nation) begins with a real or fabricated common enemy, then the current image of America in Europe may well become the beginning of a new pan-European nationalism. Our hope that the emergence of a federated Europe and the dissolution of the present nation-state system will make nationalism itself a thing of the past may be unwarrantedly optimistic. On its more popular levels—not, to be sure, in the deliberations of statesmen in Strasbourg—the movement for a united Europe has recently shown decidedly nationalistic traits. The line between this anti-American Europeanism and the very healthy and necessary efforts to federate the European nations is further confused by the fact that the remnants of European fascism have joined the fight. Their presence reminds everybody that after Briand's futile gestures at the League of Nations it was Hitler who started the war with the promise that he would liquidate Europe's obsolete nation-state system and build a united Europe. The widespread and inarticulate anti-American sentiments find their political crystallization point precisely here. Since Europe is apparently no longer willing to see in America whatever it has to hope or to fear from her own future development, it has a tendency to consider the establishment of a European government an act of emancipation from America.

Americanism on one side and Europeanism on the other side of the Atlantic, two ideologies facing, fighting and, above all, resembling each other as all seemingly opposed ideologies do—this may be one of the dangers we face.

(This is the first of three articles by Miss Arendt on the estrangement between Europe and the United States. The second will appear next week.)

AN APPEAL

Father Peter Tonello, S.D.B., writes from Assam, a district of India which, according to newspaper reports, is currently suffering calamitous floods. Father Tonello seeks help for his orphans at St. John Bosco shrine. Under normal conditions he requires two hundred dollars a month to feed them. Recently he has lacked the wherewithal to give them their first meal until one o'clock. Donations designated for Father Tonello may be sent to: Salesian Missions, 148 Main Street, New Rochelle, N.Y.

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ALCIDE de GASPERI

The Man Who Saved Italy

KEES van HOEK

ONLY a simple crucifix hung on the bare wall beside Alcide de Gasperi's desk at home in his Castel Gandolfo study, above the tranquil Alban Lake, as in his private office at the headquarters of the *Democrazia Cristiana* on Jesus Square in Rome. There his window overlooked Gesu Church, where his Requiem has since been held.

I last met the greatest democratic statesman in Italian history a few months ago. He remained seated, threw out a lanky arm in that familiar gesture of his for a firm handshake. He looked younger than his seventy-three years; his hair, resolutely combed back from a very high and broad brow, was still thick and hardly graying. Only his face looked more sallow than I remembered it. He said that he felt in excellent health, that his asthma only bothered him in winter; but I noticed more than just an occasional wheeze.

As he took off his spectacles, the big hawk nose dominated the wide, tight-lipped mouth. His pale eyes could look chilly and distant, but when he smiled or laughed (and he could easily unbend), all the square and lined hardness of his face relaxed and he looked entirely different from the usual photograph. I told him so and he chuckled: "One day Karsh of Ottawa—a great photographer—sent us proofs. My wife was aghast over some of them and wondered how she ever could have married such a grim monster. . . ."

I had come to see *Il Presidente,* as his entourage called him (as long-time Prime Minister and president of the party), to check material which I had collected for a profile. He soon obviously began to enjoy being led back in search of past times, bending over the pool of memory.

THERE was his father, a minor official in a civil service cooperative ("they first started in our part of the country," he explained proudly), his mother who had died early, the revered sister who kept the young family together, the one priest brother who died, the younger brother who is now general manager of a Milan cooperative.

There was Innsbruck, his first University and his first jail—forty days for having been involved in a student rumpus between Italian Irredentists and Tyroleans. Then Vienna for his Ph.D. He did not get a scholarship until the second year. "That first year I was perpetually hungry, I hadn't even the money to eat cheaply at the University *Mensa.* Twice a week I qualified for a free hot meal in a Convent. To reach it I had to cross the Kärtner Strasse (the Bond Street of Vienna), full of luxury shops and elegant shoppers. You know, when one has gone hungry amidst such riches, when one has had to queue for a bowl of charity, it remains acidly etched in your soul for the rest of your life." This partly explains his economic-political creed: "I am a man of the center and the center is moving to the left."

As a student he was inspired by the Christian social movement, under Burgomaster Lueger and Prince Alois von Liechtenstein; he followed lectures on sociology with one Ignaz Seipel, later to be the priest-Chancellor of Republican Austria.

Back home, he joined the staff of the local Italian paper, soon rose to editor, and was elected by the Italian voters to the Vienna Diet in 1911. He stumped the Trento countryside with *Rerum Novarum* in his attache case: "From as early as I can remember the one great issue for me was practical Christianity versus Marxist Socialism."

After the Versailles Peace Treaty his home province became part of Italy, and he changed his seat in the Vienna Diet for one in the Rome Chamber of Deputies. There he met the Sicilian priest Don Luigi Sturzo, the founder of the Popular party. "We found each other in an ideal: a Catholic party which was not clerical."

I could not help remarking that for the first Prime Minister of Italy to be a practicing Catholic (here de Gasperi smilingly corrected with the interruption, "I believe Orlando went to Mass now and then") he rather stressed the non-clerical outlook of his party. He explained how this Italian anti-clericalism is different from, for instance, the French. "It comes from the Papal States; theirs was not a bad government, but a weak and soft government. To this day my neighbors, the wine farmers of the Castelli Romani, are still anti-clerical because their fathers or grandfathers had rows with the Monsignor in charge of roads or the Monsignor collector of taxes."

After the advent of Mussolini, Don Sturzo went into exile, but Alcide de Gasperi stayed. Soon Rome became too hot for him as well. The Gasperis (in 1921 he had married the sister of a boyhood friend

Mr. Van Hoek is a European journalist who writes from Dublin.

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from his home town) decided to leave Rome and settle in Trieste. But the Fascist Secret Police pulled them out of the train at Bologna. He got four years; Donna Francesca (for aiding and abetting) was sentenced to ten months in prison. "My first months in the Regina Coeli prison in Rome were very unpleasant," he recalls dryly. "But my greatest discomfort was worry about my family." After sixteen months the remainder of his sentence was suspended—"but I was always watched by the police"—a broad grin—"then, when I became Prime Minister the same police watched me for my own sake. The greatest blessing of being out of office is to be without a bodyguard."

Out of jail, de Gasperi had gone through a very hard time financially. Then Cardinal Mercati got him a job in the Vatican Library, indexing books in a new American system. His pay was about the equivalent of fifteen dollars a week. Even then Mussolini tried to bring pressure to bear on the Vatican to have him sacked. Instead he rose over the next twelve years to the post of Secretary General of the Vatican Library. "That was very pleasant, with interesting contacts"—he smiled cryptically, indicating the underground preparations for a post-liberation democratic government.

When the liberation brought him high office and international fame, the de Gasperis did not move into the palatial Viminalo residence which is put at the disposition of the Prime Minister, but continued to live in their small flat on Boniface Street, behind the Vatican, where the living room served also as study. Fifteen years long his life had run with clockwork precision between the flat and the Vatican Library. As Prime Minister he continued to come home for his meals, still cooked by Donna Francesca herself. "Going up and down five flights of stairs thrice a day was too precious an exercise." He did not even give up the flat when his top-floor neighbor—an impoverished and somewhat unbalanced contessa who blamed de Gasperi for the abdication of King Umberto—started stamping on the floors and slamming doors; he only asked the police to restrain her from pouring acid on his wife's flower pots on the window sill.

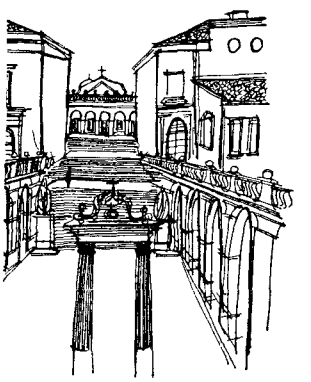
A few years ago he had an eight-room villa built—nicknamed "the White House"—on the far lonely shore of the Alban Lake, overlooking Castel Gandolfo with its Papal summer palace and observatory. With the de Gasperis lived one delicate daughter; the eldest daughter is married to a Milan architect, another is a nun, and the youngest a teacher. (When they still lived in Rome, the Prime Minister, his wife and three daughters used to walk every Sunday to Mass and Communion at St. Peter's, there to stand among the crowds of worshippers.)

He was very proud of his garden "made with our own hands" out of the deeply-forested slope. For an hour early every morning he used to walk there by himself. His favorite relaxations were reading, music and television. His house had both a radio receiver and transmitter (installed when he was Prime Minister) which is why—"through a never-explained technical mystery"—a long, confidential call of de Gasperi to Party Secretary Andreotti at a time of crisis was heard over all the TV sets in Rome. He still laughed at the recollection: "Fortunately I urged my party to be conciliatory."

IN this last long talk I found the great Italian leader fired with confidence about the newly-affirmed unity of the Christian Democratic party under Amintore Fanfani, de Gasperi's successor as leader of the party. "If we did not fear Moscow there would be no need to be so united," he remarked soberly. He indicated absolute confidence that Communism would not conquer Italy, "because the masses are merely Communists in name; only a small but admittedly dangerous core is Moscovite."

He testily observed that Moscow would never have won its present foothold in Italy but for the "Roosevelt climate" of the liberation era. As to the over-all Allied policy of the last phase of the war, he was obviously an admirer of "Churchill's far superior vision."

I remember the morning during the 1947 Paris Peace Conference when from the "sinner's benches" of the ornate session hall of the Luxembourg Palace de Gasperi mounted the rostrum, the first of the vanquished to appear before his assembled victors.



They heard him in stony silence, there was no applause at the end, but as he walked back to his seat the American Secretary of State, James Byrnes, rose as he passed by and offered his hand. "America's great aid started there and then; that same evening Byrnes invited me to a long talk at Claridge's."

There was never exuberance in de Gasperi's oratory, whether public or private. On some inspired occasions —as in Paris—he would tear up the prepared speech and speak "from the heart." His only gesticulation was an occasional tight squeezing of the big peasant hands as he talked slowly, almost as if thinking aloud.

What struck me ever anew about de Gasperi was his balance. He referred to the Communist chief, Togliatti, as an "exceedingly capable man." Incidentally, he and Togliatti used the familiar "*tu*" with each other ("after all, he was my colleague in three cabinets," said de Gasperi).

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His prime aim—he observed, that last time I met him—was the ratification of EDC. To him EDC meant Europe's choice at the crossroads, either forward to a happier future or a fall backward into the worst of all the old mistakes.

Many a time I had watched him as Prime Minister in Parliament, sitting patient and expressionless through tumultuous debates, only occasionally raising an eyebrow at some of the more startling oratory; even after the most virulent attack, his strongest rejoinder was some good-natured satire. Even more, watching him in close-up, one felt that he was indeed what he has so aptly been called: "the most unremarkable remarkable man of our time"—this man who at the age of sixty-two set out to save Italy and who thereby helped to save Europe.

THE SCREEN

JUST THE FOLKS, MA'AM

MOVIES, it seems, are getting more folksy than ever. This isn't necessarily bad—especially when the movies themselves are good, like a new Italian import, "Bread, Love and Dreams," which is bubbling over with euphoria. Coming from a country that took its neo-realism pretty seriously, this film is something of a surprise—and a very pleasant one. Its plot is almost about nothing, or, like the film's title and life itself, it's about everything in this small Italian village where the people are poor, religious and occasionally superstitious. The main object of conversation is the *Carabinieri's* new marshal (played with warmth and a middle-aged understanding by Vittorio De Sica) who is a bachelor and decides to do something about it and concentrates his attentions on two very attractive women of the village. The younger, played delightfully by Gina Lollobrigida as an impetuous gamine, tolerates the marshal's interest with surprise and amusement; but she has already fallen head-over-heels for a handsome young *Carabiniere* (Roberto Risso). The elder, a midwife played with an effective dignity by Marisa Merlini, at first accepts the marshal's ardent attentions and even allows him to accompany her on her hurried calls until she suddenly gives him the cold shoulder.

Director Luigi Comencini, who wrote the script with Ettore Margadonna, does not aim to tell a well-knit story, but he does succeed admirably in holding attention with the film's vivid characterizations. Tina Pica is excellent as the marshal's tart housekeeper, and so is Virgilio Riento as the kindly village priest who understands so well the problems of a poor, fatherless and exceptionally well-built girl like Gina.

THE French have sent over a little item that is meant to be a folksy view of city life. As far as photography and cast are concerned, "Paris Incident" succeeds in its intentions. But in telling the story of a delivery boy who loses three telegrams and then is helped and hindered in his search for them, the movie gets terribly arty and contrived. The camera shots and the street atmosphere of the Montmartre district are quite effective; and Director Henri Decoin gets good performances out of Gerard Gervais, as the harassed telegram boy, and Pierrette Simonet, as the little girl who sticks by him through thick and thin, as well as out of many members of the large supporting cast. However you keep wishing he'd get on with the story, and finally you begin to feel that half of Paris is out looking for telegrams of which there must be copies in the main office.

I suppose that "Dragnet" could almost be considered folk Americana by now, at least to the large TV audiences who are engrossed weekly by the exploits and understatements of Sergeant Joe Friday and Officer Frank Smith. The movie of the same name, directed by Jack Webb, who also plays the lead, with Ben Alexander as his assistant, is a half-hour TV "Dragnet" stretched out to an hour and a half. Although distinguished by a good cast in which Stacy Harris is outstanding as the chief villain, and by WarnerColor which adds little to the realism, the movie bogs down in a welter of clues, clipped sentences that make everybody sound like Webb, and incidents that end in repetitive high-pitched, underplayed fade-outs.

PORTRAYING an American Mrs. Chips in an exclusive school for boys, Greer Garson strains herself to be a much-loved teacher in "Her Twelve Men." She wins her charges all right and manages to attract a couple of grown-up boys too: the father of one difficult lad (Barry Sullivan) and a teacher who finally forgets his hostility (Robert Ryan). But she wears us out in the process. The fault, however, is not in our stars—but in a script that is so saccharine that one wonders how a good director like John Houseman could have taken it at all seriously.

THE most interesting piece of Americana that has turned up in a movie in a long time is found in "The Raid," an exciting little item about a group of Confederate Officers who escape from a Vermont prison during the Civil War and carefully plan a raid on a New England town. Directed with suspense by Hugo Fregonese, this picture deliberately builds up its characters, both the Southerners and the Northerners,

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so that when the big excitement comes, your loyalties are with both groups. Because of the exceptionally fine portrayal by Van Heflin, as the Confederate leader, you are likely to ally yourself with him—and his problem is by no means easy when he realizes the damn Yankees are people too and not just foes. "The Raid" successfully avoids the sentiment that could have been its pitfall. Without getting tricky, it gives you just the facts—and the emotions.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

TWO MASTERPIECES

IN the heat of a languid, dilatory summer, two plays have quickened to a positive theatrical life. At the Greenwich Mews Theatre (141 West 13th Street), an agreeable ensemble beats the Salvation Army drum of Bernard Shaw's "Major Barbara" until its stern Protestant magnificence expands visibly within the tiny hall; at the Provincetown Playhouse on MacDougal Street, Mr. Robinson Jeffers' exactly pitched, keening version of the Phaedra legend, "The Cretan Woman," is being given its first New York production. Gestures in Broadway's slothful summer sleep, they have—as theater—the tentative, incomplete quality of such acts; nonetheless, each honorably marshals an impressive array of intelligence, will and enthusiasm: the impulse behind their production is spontaneous and liberating.

The heavy tide of Bernard Shaw's presence has receded since his death, and we have only begun to sense the massive, intimidating shape of his achievement, the whorled, multi-layered splendor of his genius. Some of that buried treasure is ruined, some meretricious, but it is always to the great plays of his middle range that we turn for the reassurance of permanence. Among these, "Major Barbara" has enjoyed an anomalous esteem. Less secure of popular favor than "Pygmalion," less beautiful than "Saint Joan," less perfect than "Heartbreak House," too serious to be light, too trivial to be grand—its path has not been easy. A vivacious screen version broke disastrously in the middle, and reinforced one's latent suspicion of the play's unplayability. Yet surely it is, nothing less, a masterpiece: even in so (sadly) slack and lusterless a performance as this, how absolute its dominance, how unimpeachable the force and energy of its concern. Strip away the intellectual decor, neutralize the calculated shocks, yet what remains is an *imaging* of the individual vis-a-vis society so crossed with tension, so painfully intersected with aspiration and despair, with moral theory and ruthless experience that one is dazzled, exalted. We look about, seeking the source of such an infusion of grace, then the knowledge sharply impinges—it is a gift.

Mr. Jeffers has supped with Euripides and Racine; he gives their vaunted theme the bleak, washed imprint of his own sensibility. I found "The Cretan Woman" a restatement of the Greek substance of the deepest viability and poise; beautifully it captures the *ambiance,* the hard, clear thrust, the dramatic line at once noble and ravaged. Everywhere, too, it is flooded —and rightly—with the crystal air of Mr. Jeffers' Carmel, strewn with the passionate boulders of his world-before-time. There are, of course, vulgarities, flat, angular planes of language: when it is not bloodied with lust and vengeance, the play coldly rejects humanity for destiny and time. It lacks moral spaciousness. Yet Mr. Jeffers' tragic pessimism is *earned*: precisely that is what makes it so desolate. His play seems to me a challenge on the highest level of our contemporary dramatic literature.

One might wish to speak as kindly of its performance. But in view of an impending Broadway transfer, we are right to ask for a purification of this quite unsatisfactory interpretation. It is essential, at first, to present the piece without break: an audience which can be attracted to Phaedra and to Mr. Jeffers will surely not insist on a Chesterfield interval. Then, Mr. Theodore Marcuse must *dramatize* all the play—not merely the isolated patches which are the only visible areas of life in the current performance. Finally, to the actors: restraint, please, a control of pressure, a moment of repose. Do not tear a passion to titters, as Mr. James Thurber has recently suggested. Create the actuality; the effect will follow in its invisible wake. Forget that Miss Judith Anderson was ever born. And read (in the Cole-Chinoy volume, *Directing the Play*) Jean-Louis Barrault's *mise en scene* and commentary for one passage of Racine's "Phaedra;" you will learn something of the beautiful circuits of possibility within your craft.

RICHARD HAYES.

COMMUNICATIONS

"ANTI-SEMITISM TODAY"

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Mr. Herberg, in his article "Anti-Semitism Today" [July 16] and Mr. Manfred George, in his commentary on it [Aug. 13], are simply trying to find streamlined, neon-lighted labels for medieval concepts. Both refuse to recognize—or give no real indication of recognizing—the revolutionary changes which affected much of the world over a century and a half ago—including the Jews of the world.

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The security and dignity of life enjoyed by Jews today is in *direct proportion* to the degree to which those revolutionary changes had practical influences in creating new societal patterns.

Those Jews who escaped to the United States from Eastern and Central European areas where the libertarian ideas of the French Revolution had never penetrated retained here, for a time, some of the fears and group-consciousness which conditioned their lives overseas. But that they may have done so is no indication of an ineradicable "marginality" or "alien" peoplehood. That with the first touch of economic sufficiency, some of them should have so conducted themselves as to overstep conventional ideas of the amenities is again no manifestation of deep-seated and ineradicable characteristics *as a group.*

What is more important—and what would have been more cogent substance behind all of the high-sounding academic terminology—is the fact that once the first fearfulness was behind them and when the first display of ostentation was spent, these people became just plain, average Americans; or their children did. If they worshipped God formally and institutionally they did so in synagogues, rather than in churches or cathedrals. But in the United States of America, or Britain, or France, this is no index of "marginality."

Mr. Herberg may be *technically* accurate if he describes *some* Jews as "marginal." But whether or not they are "unadjustable" is again, an entirely different question. For history makes a very good case to prove that where "marginality" does exist, it is for Jews, a part of the *norm* of a society committed to an elite and lesser castes, which may be "marginal." And so, again, it is highly doubtful if this condition has any real relevancy to a phenomenon isolated out of such societies by calling it "anti-Semitism." And given a chance in freedom, no one can prove any permanent characteristics among these Jews making them members of a "marginal" group.

But perhaps the real tip-off on the unreality of both Mr. Herberg's and Mr. George's finely-spun theories is in Israel itself. There, certainly, "Jews" are not a "marginal" group; and certainly too, if the existence of Israeli sovereignty has not normalized the life of its citizens then little credence can be given to a theory which claims the state has normalized the status of Jews who are *not* its citizens.

No less a partisan and authoritative source than the *Government Yearbook* for 1953-54, published by the Israeli Government itself, says, on page 14:

> ". . .The State faces the difficult and acute problem of fusing exiles who are centuries apart from one another.
>
> *"The million and a half Jews who were here at the beginning of 1953 were less of a single nation than the half-million who lived in the country at the outbreak of the Second World War, though the Yishuv was far from a uniform body even then."* (My italics)

This would seem to knock Mr. Herberg's and Mr. George's generalizations into cocked-hats. The threat of professional "anti-Semites" is not to be minimized. But there are other factors involved in the so-called "Jewish problem." One of them is the tendency on the part of some Jews to attempt to make twentieth century virtues out of the fifteenth and sixteenth century vices of segregation, self-segregation, minority status and the like.

Mr. George finds an ideological confusion evidenced in the American Council for Judaism which holds that most American Jews are just individual American citizens, worshiping God within the traditions of their historic faith and in all other phases of their lives integrated or seeking integration with the American people. By waving the wand of some more language he claims to dissipate the confusion. "Jewish descent," he says, is a term which will resolve all ambiguities.

Does it? What does it mean? What is the source of the common "descent" Mr. George finds to be the ultimate solvent for all differences among Jews? And what happened to the solvent in the Israeli laboratory where so many, conflicting precipitates have appeared? What is the common "descent" for an Oriental Jew from Yemen and a Traditional Jew from Germany? What prevented the common "descent" from dissolving the differences between the German Jews and the East European variety?

Isn't it demonstrable, from history, that people who are Jews are—where the opportunity is afforded—just individuals; that they labor at the processes of adjustment to new environments as do all men? And the coloration they seek to shed as they acquire the coloration of a new environment is *not* a coloration shared by a sufficient percentage of other Jews, living in different environments, to warrant any scientific designation of it as "Jewish." It is the coloration of a limited locale and the reaction of that limited locale on *its* Jews.

Certainly the same history reveals that, given the opportunities afforded by free societies, more Jews have made better adjustments in the last century and a half than ever before in history; and that fact is nowhere so demonstrable as in the United States where the adjustment progressed well—long before there was was a State of Israel. When Mr. Herberg or Mr. George can produce the assent of any substantial percentage of American Jews to the idea of their "marginality" or their dependence upon Israel for normality, they will have a case. Until then, history speaks a more eloquent and common sense language.

ELMER BERGER, *Executive Director*
The American Council for Judaism.

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Herndon, Va.

TO the Editors: I have read with great interest the communication from Mr. Manfred George. . . . I find myself unable to accept Mr. George's view that instead of speaking of Americans of Jewish faith, Jews in America should be considered "Americans of Jewish descent." It seems to me that if all members of the Jewish faith in America are to be defined as Americans of Jewish descent, such an organization as the National Conference of Christians and Jews will have to re-think the basis upon which it has been founded. I can understand how there can be Americans of Jewish faith, and I can understand how there can be Americans of Israeli descent, but if American Jews are to be described as of "Jewish descent," this immediately makes the word "Jew" analogous to the words "British," "Frenchman," "Indonesian," and so on. I can quite easily accept the idea that a Roman Catholic, a Protestant, a Jew, a Moslem, or any individual subscribing to any other faith, can be a good American. I find it difficult to understand how a Frenchman could be a good American. . . .

Mr. George thinks that the "pluralism of American culture. . . is calculated to prevent a repetition in our country of the fate Jews suffered in Europe (and is also the *sine qua non* for the prevention of a new anti-Semitism.)" It is my opinion that exactly the opposite of this is true. The glory of America has been its lack of a pluralistic society. The tragedy of Europe and parts of Asia has been just this type of pluralism which Mr. George hopes will flourish in America. This menace of a plural society is far more subversive and dangerous to the American way of life. I quite understand that Mr. George is using the word "pluralism" to denote a desirable pattern of national unity despite limited cultural and religious diversities.

But the pattern which is suggested here for Americans of Jewish faith is definitely in the direction of the types of plural society which exist in Indonesia and other Moslem countries.

Already the development within Roman Catholicism, Judaism, and some branches of Protestantism, notably the Fundamentalist sects and some of the Lutheran groups, have headed in the direction of this type of pluralism. The proliferation of parochial schools and of religiously exclusive labor unions, veterans organizations and political lobbies has more than religious significance in American society. This is also true of the development, particularly in certain of our larger cities and likewise to some extent on the national level, of political blocs based on national descent. We have already reached the place in many local communities, although not as yet on a national scale, where there is a recognized Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish community. The implementation of Mr. George's suggestion would create the idea that Americans of Jewish descent form a community within the nation, loyal to America, yes; but with other loyalties so strong that, without a test, a question arises as to which are the strongest loyalties.

It is my fervent hope that American Jewry will insist that they are Jewish by religion, not by nationality, and that on the national level they have one and only one loyalty.

GARLAND EVANS HOPKINS.

"TRAGIC OPTIMIST"

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: I have just completed Michael Harrington's interesting analysis of Emmanuel Mounier [Aug. 20] and have the feeling that what could have been an enlightening and constructive criticism failed because of Mr. Harrington's own adherence to a position which seems to me untenable for a Christian.

Mr. Harrington says "it may be that we have created forces which we cannot cope with" and implies that "a war of total annihilation" may be inevitable. He claims that "there are historical situations in which no alternatives exist" and that the hypothesis "contradicts the liberal faith that there is always a reasonable possibility". Granted that the hypothesis contradicts the liberal faith. But does it not also contradict the Christian faith, based not on any liberal tenet that with reason you can do all things but on the Christian tenet that "with Me you can do all things". In support of his contention Mr. Harrington states that "there is not a reasonable. . . way to drop a hydrogen bomb on a city" avoiding the more significant point that hydrogen bombs will only be dropped on cities as the result of the decisions of men. . . .

It seems to me that given God, given grace, and given human reason there is no such thing as a world calamity which may be inevitable. A contrary thesis leads to that passivity in the face of evil which is so strongly opposed to the Christian psychology of hope. And this not because the hope is irrational but because the thesis is false.

By spending time criticizing Mounier for not holding a thesis which is itself untenable, Mr. Harrington lost the opportunity to initiate a discussion which might have been fruitful. . . . One point raised in the article is the problem of technology. Mounier is little disturbed by the nature of technology but only by its use. Mr. Harrington implies a possible disagreement in his question "is the alienation of the worker merely from the value of his product or is it not inherent in the very rhythm and being of technology itself?" If Mr. Harrington has further thought in this area I think it could prove valuable reading.

JAMES GUINAN.

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Who Will Shape Tomorrow?

GEOFFREY ASHE

There was an old man of Peru
Who dreamed he was eating his shoe;
He woke in the night
In a terrible fright,
And found it was perfectly true.

THE Age of Progress has had a large share of dreamers, Peruvian and otherwise. Many have ventured into prophecy, and it is an easy generalization to say that most of the prophecies have gone wrong. A glance backward, however, shows that the issue is a little more complicated than that. The prophets do quite often foresee events. What they fail to foresee is the atmosphere surrounding them. The thing anticipated happens all right, but it seems like something else. The reality corresponds to the dream —yet it shocks.

Thus Bellamy and others foreshadowed the millennial Welfare State. The Welfare State came; the millennium did not. H. G. Wells predicted the end of the Victorian era, the overthrow of tradition, the dawn of sanity through world unification and applied science, the rise of a nobler human type. Sure enough, a Messiah stepped forth to destroy the old institutions, preaching a gospel of steel and concrete and supermen and world empire. But the Messiah's name was Hitler.

Following in Wells' wake, a series of novelists and popularizers foretold the technological revolution—the transformation of human life by atomic power, rockets, robots, helicopters, television, mechanical brains. These too are with us now. But the transformation is something less than inspiring. The Old Man of Peru has sunk his teeth into a seven-league boot.

ROBERT JUNGK, the author of *Tomorrow is Already Here* [Simon and Schuster. $3.50], is a German Jewish journalist with a splendid record of opposition to tyranny. Even his doctoral thesis, which he wrote during World War II as an exile in Switzerland, concerned the battle for freedom of the press against Metternich. After the war he became a correspondent for some Swiss papers, and spent several years in the United States. Somehow or other he managed to visit quite a number of places which are notoriously impossible to visit. He saw rockets being tested, atomic fuels being processed, jet pilots being experimentally tortured. And he now reports that he has witnessed a new sort of tyranny: the tyranny of a Promethean obsession—a lust for omnipotence which is turning America into a nation of experts and victims, too remote from the basic verities to enjoy their own achievements. The technologists are dehumanizing humanity in the name of progress.

This sounds sweeping and melodramatic. It is. Herbert Agar, who contributes an introduction, maintains that Dr. Jungk "does not often generalize." He may not do it often, but when he does, he does it with a crash that resounds through the book. "The Americans today are concerned with bigger things than land ownership. They are fundamentally more ambitious than even their sharpest adversaries believe . . . . America is striving to win power over the sum total of things . . . . The stake is the throne of God." How general can you get?

The most important chapter is the one devoted to the jet pilots. Here we are confronted with promising young Americans reduced to servitude, dullness and monomania by the demands of the revolution in which they participate. The jet pilot (that "poor little superman") must be denied all excitement, all sense of adventure. He must even forego conjugal love, since the thought of a too-fond wife will unsteady his hands on the controls. He must learn to regard himself as a "faulty structure," and submit to weird torments and indignities to adapt him to his fastidious aircraft.

As another instance of human debasement, Dr. Jungk discusses the International Business Machines plant at Endicott, N. Y. We are introduced to the punched cards, the uncanny tabulating equipment, the fancy calculators and typewriters, and the famous "THINK" notices—which the author regards as highly ironic. We are conspicuously not introduced to what IBM management has done in the way of humanizing its own organization and making its workers' lives more significant. Only one moral is allowed to be drawn: the modern office is just another factory; the clerical worker has been caught in the same trap that the factory hand was caught in years ago. The clerical worker only? No, even the highest officers of the State. For American policy, as another chapter discloses, is increasingly governed by the inhuman logic of electronic computers. Mechanical monsters with queer acrostic names dictate the grand strategy of the Republic.

Mr. Ashe works in the field of production engineering. He writes on political and literary subjects for this and other magazines.

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THESE sections, with two or three on the prison-communities of atomic technicians, embody the author's essential message. As a pendant, he adds a pathetic description of the amateur uranium prospectors, hopelessly scratching for the last available dregs of adventure, and forced to seek even those along lines decreed by the system. The book, however, contains many more episodes, some of them fairly relevant and some extraordinarily misguided. I cannot see what purpose is served by describing a small Hollywood studio devoted to furtive nude photography. But there is one section, "The Church and the Skyscraper," which calls for special attention.

After telling how the old Church of St. Nicholas in New York was torn down to make room for the present office block, Dr. Jungk enlarges for several pages on the activities of a so-called "timekeeper" whom he found watching the elevators. This person was making observations of average waiting times, and trying to formulate proposals for better service. Dr. Jungk explains that he was not an isolated phenomenon. "The men with the stop watches are highly unpopular among American workers. There is hardly a trade in which they do not from time to time appear. . . . What comes of this is that the norm of production is raised and the job . . . develops into a sort of drill in which each movement is calculated in inches and numbers of seconds."

Now to begin with, he is not speaking of timekeepers, but of time-study men. Perhaps the translator is at fault. But the point which needs making is that the unscrupulous use of the stopwatch for speedup purposes is not a contemporary horror at all. It practically died out during World War II, and today the stopwatch itself is losing ground. To parade the time-study man as a new sort of bogey is entirely illegitimate. The heading of this section ought to be, not "Tomorrow is Already Here," but "Yesterday is Still Here."

Dr. Jungk has thrown together a large mass of data of very unequal value. Sometimes he is genuinely exposing the trend of the times. Sometimes he is raking up odds and ends of stale anti-Americana to darken the picture. And in his final chapter, where he seems to turn the entire thesis upside down and argue that the "grasp at omnipotence" is only a passing phase, he verges on incoherence. There is much vivid reporting and much truth. But the performance as a whole is unsatisfying.

For one of the worst things in the contemporary scene is implied rather than stated. That is the awful gap between the technologists and their critics. Specialization is a curse here as elsewhere, and it cuts both ways. Over against the specialist of technology we have the specialist of "culture" or "humanism," and each tends to despise the other and dodge the issues which he raises. Observers like Robert Jungk wander over the world striking attitudes of alarm, but they seldom offer convincing alternatives to what they condemn.

Take, for instance, the mechanized office. Grant (which I personally would not) that an IBM outfit is more dehumanizing than the quill-paced counting-houses described by Dickens. And suppose Henry Ford II reads Dr. Jungk, is converted, and decides to change his own tabulating department. He scraps all the equipment and hires a cavalcade of clerks to do the same job. Very well. What will the reform cost him in increased office space? What will happen to his payroll? How much will he have to add to the price of each car? How many of his customers will promptly switch to General Motors? And how long will it be before most of the clerks are out on the street again, with their humanity confirmed, no doubt, but their pockets empty?

Or take the more spectacular matter of the computers, the mechanical brains. Here Dr. Jungk makes the case for the technicians almost too easy. Outlining the work of SEAC, Washington's electronic oracle, he claims President Truman was able to fire MacArthur because SEAC warned that the General's policy would lead to a disastrous war. If this is true, the anti-computer man must say in effect: "Here is something which has saved the human race at least once, possibly more than once. I am against it and I want it abolished." An audience could hardly be blamed for feeling a certain lack of force in his plea.

THE evils exist, but the remedies must come through a synthesis, not through retreat or Neo-Luddism. And there is really no more ground for black gloom than for blind cheerfulness. Those who think of American enterprise as a mere orgy of mindless and heartless manipulation had better explore the files, say, of *Fortune* for the past five years or so. They won't find the romantic or anti-progressive outlook. But they will find a capacity for honest thought and far-ranging inquiry scarcely hinted at in the verbal cartoons perpetrated by apostles of "culture" and "humanism." The powers propelling the machine are neither fascist nor philistine. Ideas can still carry weight, and Tomorrow, after all, is not actually here; we are still free to shape it.

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Speaking the Racial Agony of His People

TELL FREEDOM. By Peter Abrahams. Knopf. $4.

By DANIEL M. FRIEDENBERG

THE spate of good books flowing from the Union of South Africa today present a rather inverted argument for social strife. Happy families, nations and cultures leave no stain on time while, to the contrary, the great art has flourished best in the collapsing Athens of Pericles, the amoral Italian Renaissance and Elizabethan England. It may be a fundamental question whether we could endure the world of our dreams-come-true; in suspending history, we may hang ourselves.

Certainly *Tell Freedom* by Peter Abrahams, the autobiographical history in novel form of a young South African of dark skin, would be impossible to conceive abstracted from the racial agony sweeping his land. For South Africa today has no more kinship with black Equatorial Africa than it does with Moslem North Africa; the gold and diamonds and uranium of the high veldt has pitched the land of the Boers into the industrial twentieth century with a jolt that has leaped centuries and shriveled space. The black youth of Peter Abrahams in Johannesburg is closer to the *Black Boy* which was Richard Wright in Memphis, Tennessee, than it is to any picture of tension in tribal Africa. The white man of South Africa, like his brethren in our own South, has need of skilled blacks to run his machines in field and mine, and teeters on the impossible dilemma of separating technical from humanistic knowledge: the result is spiritual chaos for both master and slave.

Yet we may be thankful, considering the vision of oppression that the Communists have succeeded in painting to the non-white populations of United States racial policies, that among the educated Coloreds of South Africa, America—the teeming communities of Harlem and Chicago—is still viewed as the land of freedom and opportunity. Mr. Abrahams says significantly: "If the American Negro was not free, he was, at least, free to give voice to his unfreedom. And there was promise for me in the very fact that so many of them had risen to high eminence."

Racism is the greatest sin of our time. Its blighted fruit stirs in every hamlet in Asia and Africa, cursing the hand that gave it seed, rejecting the ways of the men, the ways in good and evil, in power or decline, that set it breathing. For to be degraded in spirit, deliberately spurned or spat upon as an inferior human being, is a greater shock to the sensitive than the ordeal of poverty. This the testimony of a China in revolt, an India alienated, an Africa swarming with tension, should bear witness. Yet, Peter Abrahams shows in nauseous detail that the Boer has learned nothing and, hands over ears and eyes closed, is marching toward the same precipice, as though determined to prove that the revolutionaries who regard Western values as mockery are the true prophets.

The astounding quality of *Tell Freedom* is the lack of bitterness of the author. Peter Abrahams, after enduring experiences that would make most of us hateful and venomous, emerges as a man full of compassion and warmth. His love of life, the taste of food when hungry, the smell of spring, the scent of women, is so strong it overpowers his intellectual tensions. Oddly, the very compassion in pain which ennobles his humanity weakens his art. For this is writing something less than great; it is a child talking, a child who has retained his innocence because he has allied himself with the dream phantasies of life; and the degree to which he curbs his tense indignation reduces his literary power.

The weakest sections deal with the qualities of the mind, the struggles of intellect and spirit. Like many youthful rebels, Mr. Abrahams embraced successively Christianity and Communism, only to reject the messages of both. It is a truly superior being who can sum up in a few pages the two most important messages teaching salvation and then move beyond them: such exalted power is not given to

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the rest of us ordinary mortals. Because many nominal Christians reject the explicit meaning of the Sermon on the Mount, does this mean Christianity is wrong? Because many Marxians are fanatics and lack the more human virtues of laughter and forgiveness, does this mean the doctrinal content of Communism is unworkable? Perhaps. . . still many may be left repentant but unconvinced.

Mr. Abrahams is a warmly human and uncomplicated personality to whom spiritual problems are not obsessive. Yet, tensions peek through the literary broadcloth, for example, his habit of having affairs only with white women. One is left at the end of this remarkable book with a feeling that the spirit of man has many subterranean labyrinths in which it hides itself, and perhaps the most effective is the hothouse cultivation of broad pagan serenity.

Murder in the Grand Manner

DEAD AND NOT BURIED. By H. F. M. Prescott. Macmillan. $2.50.

By SERGE HUGHES

MURDER is good for the soul. It is a balm, soothing the tensions of tiring summer, resting us a few delicious hours, making us sensibly pause in our methodic quest for reputation, security and sanctity. All the nonsense about the immorality of escape literature! We need to escape, and needing to, can do no better than to look for beautiful and inviting exits: *Dead and Not Buried* is a magnificent one and the first step over its threshold will reassure the most fastidious inquirer and make him want to linger. No tedious dialectic of uppercuts, cheesecake and wisecracks here, but murder in the classic style, mellow, leisurely, with an eye for those fine details that reveal the sureness of an artist: murder at its best.

What a substantial service novelists could render if they too recognized the need of at least one foul murder in their earnest lives. Not a multitude of murders, coarse-grained and unfeeling, but just one sharply etched, coherent act of homicide. The writer of this story knew that tiring summers have a way of lingering and she knew that a brief excursion in murder does not stand in the way but helps in the creation of a pure and high art. In 1938 she first published this work, now reissued, and as a reward for her diligence, fourteen years later the Muses, grateful and generous, inspired her to write *The Man on a Donkey,* one of the finest novels to come out of contemporary England in these last fifty years.

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man and the other an untidy, shell-shocked artist. Further removed from the hub of the story are the Vicar of Benmarsh, fittingly kind, his daughter, the village policeman, a garage mechanic, and assorted wives, cooks and servant girls. All move under the shadow of the Great God Gossip.

But we shall not tell who killed Cock Robin. We shall say, though, that it would be an excellent idea for most people to find out.

Whoever the Frenchman was, he put it so aptly: "C'est beau, un beau crime!"

19th Century

POLITICS AND OPINION IN THE 19TH CENTURY. By John Bowle. Oxford. $4.50.

By MICHAEL HARRINGTON

THE nineteenth century understandably exercises a fascination upon the twentieth. Paradoxically, it seems both near and far. As the century in which the industrial revolution and science emerged, it is closer to us than simple chronology would indicate, for we are part of the same world. And yet as the century of the ideology of progress, a fundamentally optimistic time, the nineteenth seems dis-when viewed from the crisis of our era.

John Bowle's *Politics and Opinion in the 19th Century* is an attempt to survey nineteenth century political theory from the standpoint of contemporary man.

There is certainly nothing wrong when a historian indicates his specific bias, the element of the present in his view of the past. Indeed, since some bias is inevitable, it is well to have it consciously stated. The danger, however, is that the taking of such a point of view will lead to a retroactive reading of the past. And this danger is evident in Mr. Bowle's book.

Before getting down to cases with regard to this aspect of *Politics and Opinion in the 19th Century* I want to state a more general problem. It arises in all such surveys of periods, especially when they are related to the modern crisis, as Bowle's book. Ideas affect politics, often radically. Yet ideas are not the substance of politics or the sole principle of its movement. Ideological history always runs the danger of implying that because the genealogy of ideas was thus and so, *therefore* the genealogy of events was thus and so.

This problem was present, for example, in Camus' *Rebel* and in Lubac's *Drama of Atheistic Humanism*. In other writers, Nietzsche has been seen as a "creator" of Nazism. This kind of error is a factor in Bowle's book. I think that he is far too quick to assume that a verbal formulation which resembles a later reality caused it.

But to return to the more specific point: Mr. Bowle errs in the direction of a retroactive approach toward history. It is not simply that his thesis for the present is that a new humanism is the only way out of the crisis of our time. Nor is it that he likes best those nineteenth century thinkers with whom he agrees. It is rather that he fails to understand those thinkers with whom he disagrees. He tends to project what he regards as the present consequences of their theories back into the theories themselves.

His treatment of Hegel is a good

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Too much contemporary journalism appeals precisely to a part only of the personality; at best to the reason, at worst to the fallen senses or emotions in isolation from the spirit.

To set events against a backdrop of eternal values: it means first of all to see humanity whole. If you report a murder in the manner of the gutter-press, you de-personalize the people concerned in it; they become not human beings but things, means to sensation.

The Catholic writer must treat human beings as ends, not means; he must show them in the round; and then he must see and treat their lives, their thoughts and actions as having immortal significance. So will he be helping to restore to our shallow world the sense of depth; and in doing that he will be doing work which is itself of eternal value.

GERALD VANN, O.P.
in The Commonweal, February 23, 1951

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example of this. Hegel provides, I think, a touchstone for measuring the historian's ability to make a sympathetic act of the intelligence. It is all too easy to ridicule Hegel's maddening jargon, to reject his massive structure—and to miss his very real contribution to modern thought. Mr. Bowle gives this kind of treatment to Hegel. I do not think he makes any real attempt to go beyond the fantastic terminology where The Real is Rational and to discover there the real substance, the real value, of Hegel's thought. For example, it is of tremendous importance to Western thought that Hegel insisted so much on the dynamic character of history. That he saw this movement in terms of a dialectic scheme and as the Progress of the Idea in History should not blind us to the fundamental perception.

In other cases, Mr. Bowle's bias leads to an even more serious error, not of a lack of understanding, but positively of *mis*understanding. Thus, he refers to Feuerbach as a "crass materialist"—despite the fact that Feuerbach once devoted an entire polemic (on Dorguth) *against* crass materialism. And there is this amazing remark: ". . . the original writings [of Marx and Engels] would seem to demonstrate that the most faithful political interpreters of Marx and Engels have been Lenin and Stalin. . . ."

This last statement is characteristic of what I see as the major flaw in the book. First, I disagree with the objective judgment. I agree with Borkenau that Lenin turned Marxism toward voluntarism. I refuse to even consider the Stalinist epigone—say Varga's books demonstrating the "scientific" truth of this or that twist in line—as worthy of intellectual consideration. But over and above my disagreement with the content of the judgment is my fear that the *reason* for the image of Marxism which Mr. Bowle presents throughout his book is not the writings of Marx and Engels but an ex post facto interpretation by way of Stalinism. Here, I think, lies the real danger of bias.

Yet there are sections of great

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value in this book over and above the scholarship which is uniformly fine throughout. For example, Mr. Bowle stresses the importance of the Utopian Socialists—Fourier, Owen, Saint-Simon—in the development of nineteenth century thought. He writes of them: "They raised questions often now more topical than in their own day." And his treatment of Saint-Simon (Totalitarian and Technocrat) is original and challenging, worthy of favorable comparison with Martin Buber's *Paths in Utopia.* The essay on Durkheim is first rate as is the treatment of Bentham.

The conclusion of the book—the need for a new humanism, for rationality and law, for a conscious working out of the problems we face—is, in one sense, something that can't be argued since everyone hopes for such a consummation, yet it is for that very reason not sufficiently tough. Without malice, I would refer Mr. Bowle to Hegel who, in wild jargon to be sure, understood the role of evil in history, the movement of antithesis in the dialectic. I would make this same criticism of all modern humanism. For as Bertrand Russell (whom Mr. Bowle admires) remarks, if man is forced to choose between rational world government and self-destruction he will probably choose the latter.

Politics and Opinion in the 19th Century has real elements of merit. Its scholarship is obvious. Some of the essays—on Bentham, on the Utilitarians, on Saint-Simon and Durkheim—are brilliant. But in other essays, especially those concerned with figures who are not in the tradition of humanism as Mr. Bowle conceives it, there is an unwillingness to make the effort to understand, or worse, a retroactive reading of the primary texts. For the ideological historian the way is dangerous indeed.

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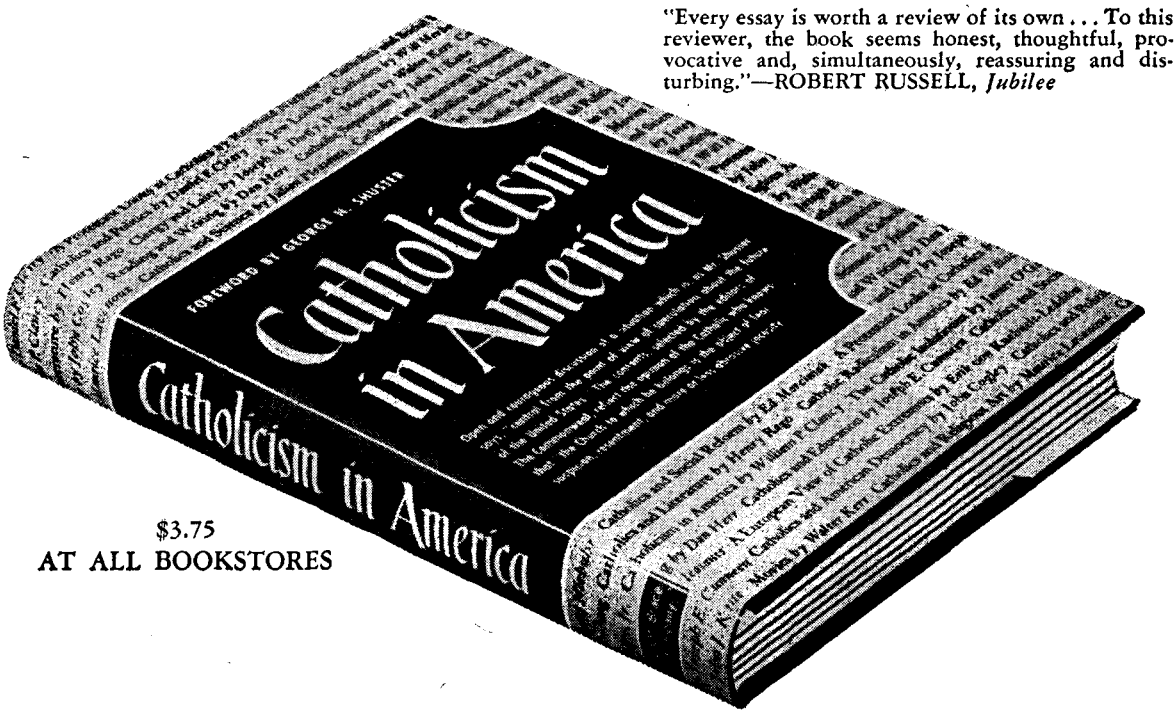

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